Marringarr language

The **Maringarr language** (**Marri Ngarr**, **Marenggar**, **Maringa**) is a moribund Australian Aboriginal language spoken along the northwest coast of the Northern Territory.

Marti Ke (**Magati Ke**, **Matige**, **Magadige**, **Mati Ke**, also Magati-ge, Magati Gair) lies in the same language category. It is or was spoken by the Mati Ke people. As of 2020 it is included in a language revival project which aims to preserve critically endangered languages.

Contents

Marri Ngarr	
Matige	
Native to	Australia
Region	Daly River
Ethnicity	Marringarr, Mati Ke
Native speakers	8 Marri Ngarr (2006 census)[1] 2 Magati Ke (2009)
Language family	Western Daly ▪ **Marri Ngarr**
Dialects	Marri Ngarr Marti Ke (Magati-ge)
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	Either: zmt – Marri Ngarr zmg – Marti Ke
Glottolog	mari1418 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/mari1418)[2]
AIATSIS[1]	N102 (https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/language/N102) Marri Ngarr, N163 (https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/language/N163) Magati Ke

Geographic distribution

The language has been spoken in the Northern Territory, Wadeye, along Timor Sea,[3] coast south from Moyle River estuary to Port Keats, southwest of Darwin.[4]

Current status

According to the Language Database, as of 2005 Mati Ke language had a population of three (Patrick Nudjulu, Johnny Chula, Agatha Perdjert).[3][5] Mati Ke speakers have primarily switched to use of English and the flourishing Aboriginal language Murrinh-Patha.[3] The ethnic population is about 100, and there are 50 second language users.

As the language is almost non-existent to date, linguists have been working on collecting information and recording the voices of the remaining speakers.[3]

Language revival project

As of 2020, Mati Ke is one of 20 languages prioritised as part of the Priority Languages Support Project, being undertaken by First Languages Australia and funded by the Department of Communications and the Arts. The project aims to "identify and document critically-endangered languages — those languages for which little or no documentation exists, where no recordings have previously been made, but where there are living speakers".[6]

The three Marringarr elders who are the last known native speakers of Magati Ke

Grammar

The vocabulary is limited, therefore the relations and positioning of the words matter to make sense of the construction according to the situation.

Nouns' classification constitutes a core of the language that forms an understanding of the world for its speakers. There are 10 classes amongst which are places and times, speech and language.

Reference to the class of spirits, elderly or to the people with respect is composed of prefix *me*+noun.[3]

References

1. N102 (https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/language/N102) Marri Ngarr at the Australian Indigenous Languages Database, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (see the info box for additional links)
2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Maringarr–Matige" (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/mari1418). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
3. Abley, Mark (2003). *Spoken Here: Travels Among Threatened Languages*. Toronto, ON: Random House Canada. ISBN 0679311017.
4. "Marti Ke" (http://www.ethnologue.com/language/zmg). *Ethnologue*. Retrieved 14 December 2015.
5. "The Language Database - Mati Ke" (http://www.hermanboel.eu/language-database/lg_mati_ke.htm). *www.hermanboel.eu*. Retrieved 14 December 2015.
6. "Priority Languages Support Project" (https://www.firstlanguages.org.au/projects/plsp). *First Languages Australia*. Retrieved 13 January 2020.

External links

- Marri Ngarr (http://dalylanguages.org/view_language.php?id=10) at the Dalylanguages.org website (http://dalylanguages.org/).